OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The meeting approved a number of projects in thrust areas to be taken up for implementation and reviewed the progress of various matters connected with the Integrated Long Term Programme of Cooperation in Science and Technology. The meeting was a follow-up of the agreement signed by the Prime Minister with General Secretary Gorbachove; there was no fresh agreement signed in the meeting.

Citizenship to stateless Sri Lankan persons

1073. SHRI K. GOPALAN:
SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Stateless Sri Lankan who have been given citizenship so far by respective countries under Shastri-Bhandranaike accord 1963;

(b) the number of such Stateless citizens still there in Sri Lanka;

(c) the number out of them likely to be given citizenship by Sri Lanka and India;

(d) by when all Stateless citizens are expected to be settled respectively in Sri Lanka and India; and

(e) what steps are being taken to solve the issue permanently?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Under the terms of the Shastri Bandaranaike Agreement of 1964, as modified by the Sirimavo Indira Gandhi Agreement of 1974 and a subsequent agreement signed in January 1986, India has undertaken to grant citizenship to 506,000 and Sri Lanka to 469.000 stateless persons of recent Indian origin. Against the above quotas, India has so far granted citizenship to 420,133 and Sri Lanka to 211,153 accountable persons along with their respective natural increases.

(b) and (c) The number of persons whose applications still remain pending, i.e., 85,867 persons in the case of India and 257,847 in the case of Sri Lanka, remain stateless. Both countries are committed to fulfilling their respective obligations.

(d) As the grant of citizenships and the process of repatriation to India of Indian citizens is dependent on the applicants coming forward and completing all procedures, no definite time-frame can be given.

(e) Both Governments are in touch with each other concerning implementation of the agreements and grant of citizenship to the remaining persons.

Pending cases and vacancies of Judges in Madras High Court

1074. SHRI T. R. BALU:
SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of cases that are presently pending in Madras High Court and category-wise figures;

(b) the number of them that are more than (i) three (ii) five and (iii) ten years old and category-wise figures;

(c) the number of vacancies that occurred in Madras High Court along with its date and when each vacancy was filled up during the last three years;

(d) the number of total vacancies that are there in Madras High Court the date of each vacancy;

(e) what steps are being taken to fill up these vacancies immediately; and

(f) what steps are being taken to dispose of long pending cases immediately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI HANS RAJ BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) Information is being collected.

(c) and (d) During the last 3 years (since 1.5.85), 9 vacancies of Judges occurred in the Madras High Court on 1.6.85, 10.3.86, 10.8.86, 3.9.86 23.10.86, 10.5.87, 23.11.87, 11.11.87 and 14.3.88. The vacancy which occurred on 1.6.85 was filled up on 1.7.87. The other 8 vacancies, including that of the Chief Justice, continue to exist.

(e) The appointment of Chief Justice involves deliberation in consultation with the concerned Constitutional authorities Proposals for filling up the vacancies of puisne Judges have been received. However, it is not possible to indicate how soon these vacancies would be filled up.

(f) Steps taken from time to time to reduce pendency in Courts have been indicated in the Statement attached.

Statement

Steps taken from time to time to reduce pendency in courts

1. Elimination of arrears in all courts had been discussed in the Conference of Chief Justices, Chief Ministers and Law Ministers of States held on 31st August 1st September 1985 and the Resolutions of the Conference had been commended to the High Courts and the State Governments for implementation.

2. The Code of Civil Procedure was amended in 1976 to abolish Letters Patent Appeal from judgment of Single Judge of the High Court in Second Appeal (*vide* Section 100-A).

3. The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 was amended in 1978 to expedite trial of criminal cases.

4. The sanctioned strength of the High Court Judges has been increased from 351 in March 1977 to 444 as on 1st May, 1988.

5. The recommendations contained in the 79th Report of the Law Commission on delay and arreas in High Courts and other Appellate Courts are being implemented by the High Courts.

6. The High Courts are taking the following steps to expedite disposal of cases:—

(a) Cases involving common questions are being grouped together.

(b) Matters are fixed for hearing by giving short returnable dates;

(c) Printing of records is dispensed with, in many cases; and

(d) Priority is given to cases requiring quick disposal.

7. The Government have entrusted the Law Commission, the study of the judicial system to introduce necessary reforms. The terms of reference are:—

(a) the need for decentralisation of the system of administration of justice by;

(i) establishing, extending and strengthening in rural areas the institution of Nyaya Panchayats or other mechanisms for resolving disputes;

(ii) setting up a system of participatory justice with defined

jurisdiction and powers in suitable areas and centres; and

(iii) establishing other tiers or systems within the judicial hierarchy to reduce the volume of work in the Supreme Court and the High Courts;

(b) the matters for which Tribunals (excluding Services Tribunals) as envisaged in Part-XIV-A of the Constitution need to be established expeditiously and various aspects related to their establishment and working;

(c) the procedural laws with a view generally to disposing of cases expeditiously, eliminating unnecessary litigation, delays in hearing of cases and reforms in procedures and procedural laws and particularly to devising procedures appropriate to the subjects envisaged in items (a) (i) and (a) (ii);

(d) the method of appointments to subordinate courts, subordinate judiciary;

(e) the training of Judicial Officers;

(f) the role of the legal profession in strengthening the system of administration of justice;

(g) the desirability of formulation of the norms, which the Government and the Public Sector Undertakings should follow in the settlement of disputes including a review of the present system for conduct of litigation on behalf of the Government and such Undertakings;

(h) the cost of litigation with a view to lessening the burden on the litigants;

(i) formation of an All India Judicial Service; and

(j) such other matters as the Commission considers proper or necessary for the purposes aforesaid or as may be referred to it from time to time by the Government.

Enquiry in fire in COD Jabalpur

1075. SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:
SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have completed the inquiry into the fire incident in Central Ordnance Depot in Jabalpur recently;

(b) if so, the details of the report; and

(c) if no, report has so far been received, by when the same is likely to be received?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Inquiry is likely to be complete during this month and the report is expected thereafter.

Cases registered by CBI against public servants

1076. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number and details of cases registered by CBI against the public servants for involvement in crime like fraud, cheating, defalcation and corruption since January, 1988;

(b) the number and details of cases for which charge-sheets have been framed; and